General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 February 2001

Fifty-fifth session
Agenda item 107

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/55/595 and Corr.1 and 2)*]

55/69. Improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system

The General Assembly,

Recalling Articles 1 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as Article 8, which provides that the United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs,

Recalling also the goal, contained in the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women,[1] of the achievement of overall gender equality, particularly at the Professional level and above, by the year 2000,

Recalling further its resolution 54/139 of 17 December 1999 on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat,

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 2000/46 of 20 April 2000[2] on integrating the human rights of women throughout the United Nations system, in particular paragraph 11, in which the Commission recognizes that gender mainstreaming will strongly benefit from the enhanced and full participation of women, including at the higher levels of decision-making in the United Nations system,

Taking note also of the recommendations made by the women heads of State and Government and women heads of United Nations agencies at their meeting, held on 5 September 2000, just prior to the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, to improve female representation within the United Nations system, especially at senior levels,[3]

Welcoming the decision of the Secretary-General to include, in the performance appraisal of managers, information on the opportunities presented for the selection of women candidates and on progress made in improving women's representation, including efforts made to identify women candidates,

---

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 3* and corrigendum (E/2000/23 and Corr.1), chap. II, sect. A.

[3] See www.womenworldleaders.org.

Taking into account the continuing lack of representation or under-representation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing countries, including least developed countries and small island developing States, and from countries with economies in transition,

Taking note with appreciation of those departments and offices that have achieved the goal of gender balance, as well as of those departments that have met or exceeded the goal of 50 per cent in the selection of women candidates for vacant posts in the past year,

Welcoming progress made in improving the representation of women at some levels of the Secretariat, but expressing concern that progress in improving the representation of women at the senior and policy-making levels has slowed, that the percentage of women appointed and promoted to one particular level has declined, and also expressing concern at the slow incremental pace at which the overall representation of women in the Secretariat has increased,

Expressing concern that there are currently no women acting as special representatives or envoys,

Noting that the statistics on the representation of women in the organizations of the United Nations system are not fully up to date,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General and the actions contained therein;[4]

2. *Reaffirms* the urgent goal of achieving 50/50 gender distribution in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at the senior and policy-making levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and also taking into account the continuing lack of representation or under-representation of women from certain countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

3. *Welcomes*:

(*a*) The ongoing personal commitment of the Secretary-General to meeting the goal of gender equality and his assurance that gender balance will be given the highest priority in his continuing efforts to bring about a new management culture in the Organization, including full implementation of the special measures for the achievement of gender equality;[5]

(*b*) The pledge of the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system to intensify their efforts to meet the gender equality goals set out in the Beijing Declaration[6] and Platform for Action;[1]

[4] A/55/399 and Corr.1.

[5] ST/AI/1999/9.

[6] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

(*c*) The actions agreed upon by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", to ensure the full and equal participation of women at all levels of decision-making in the United Nations system;[7]

(*d*) The inclusion of the objective of improving gender balance in action plans on human resources management for individual departments and offices, and encourages further cooperation between heads of departments and offices, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat in the implementation of these plans, which include specific targets and strategies for improving the representation of women in individual departments;

(*e*) The designation of focal points for women in United Nations peacekeeping operations, and requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the focal points are designated at a sufficiently high level and enjoy full access to senior management in the mission area;

(*f*) The continued provision of specific training programmes on gender mainstreaming and gender issues in the workplace, tailored to meet the special needs of individual departments, commends those heads of departments and offices who have launched gender training for their managers and staff, and strongly encourages those who have not yet organized such training to do so by the end of the biennium;

4. *Regrets* that the goal of 50/50 gender distribution will not be met by the end of the year 2000, and urges the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts to realize significant progress towards this goal in the near future;

5. *Expresses concern* that, in five departments and offices of the Secretariat, women still account for less than 30 per cent of staff, and encourages the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to meet the goal of gender balance within all departments and offices of the Secretariat;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in order, inter alia, to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter:

(*a*) To identify and attract suitably qualified women candidates, in particular in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in other Member States that are unrepresented or under-represented in the Secretariat and in occupations in which women are under-represented;

(*b*) To continue to monitor closely the progress made by departments and offices in meeting the goal of gender balance and to ensure that the appointment and promotion of suitably qualified women will be no less than 50 per cent of all appointments and promotions until the goal of 50/50 gender distribution is met, inter alia, through full implementation of the special measures for women and the further development of monitoring and assessment mechanisms to meet targets for improving women's representation;

(*c*) To enable the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to monitor effectively and facilitate progress in the implementation of the departmental action plans for the achievement of gender

[7] Resolution S-23/3, annex.

balance and the special measures for women, inter alia, by ensuring access to the information required to carry out that work;

(*d*) To intensify his efforts to create, within existing resources, a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, including the development of policies for flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements and child-care and elder-care needs, as well as the provision of more comprehensive information to prospective candidates and new recruits on employment opportunities for spouses and the expansion of gender-sensitivity training in all departments, offices and duty stations;

(*e*) To strengthen further the policy against harassment, including sexual harassment, inter alia, by ensuring the full implementation of the guidelines for its application at Headquarters and in the field;

7. *Strongly encourages* the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, especially in matters related to peacekeeping, peace-building, preventive diplomacy and economic and social development, as well as in operational activities, including appointment as resident coordinators, and to appoint more women to other high-level positions;

8. *Encourages* the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system to continue to develop common approaches for retaining women, inter-agency mobility and the improvement of career development opportunities;

9. *Strongly encourages* Member States:

(*a*) To support the efforts of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution, especially at senior and policy-making levels, by identifying and regularly submitting more women candidates for appointment to intergovernmental, judicial and expert bodies, by identifying and proposing national recruitment sources that will assist the organizations of the United Nations system in identifying suitable women candidates, in particular from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and by encouraging more women to apply for positions within the Secretariat, the specialized agencies, funds and programmes and the regional commissions, including positions in areas in which women are under-represented, such as peacekeeping, peace-building and other non-traditional areas;

(*b*) To identify women candidates for assignment to peacekeeping missions and to improve the representation of women in military and civilian police contingents;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the present resolution, inter alia, by providing up-to-date statistics on the number and percentage of women in all organizational units and at all levels throughout the United Nations system, and on the implementation of departmental action plans for the achievement of gender balance, to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-fifth session and to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session.

81st plenary meeting
4 December 2000